

Public Golf Course Sizes Up Soldier Hollow

If Approved, Construction Begins Spring 2002

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COURIER STAFF

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If approved, a 36-hole public golf course may add to the recreational attractions in Wasatch Mountain State Park, home of the 2002 Winter Olympic Nordic and biathlon venue at Soldier Hollow. So far, the response is favorable.

In 1964, at the urging of the L.D.S. church, owners turned over their property, including the lot where the course is slated to be built, to the Wasatch Mountain State Park. One stipulation: they had rights to lease the

property from the park until it is used for recreational purposes.

"I couldn't think of a more recreational purpose

developer who wanted to come in during the early 1990s. I think most of the leasees at this time would be ready to give it back."



Actually, neither. Golfers along the Wasatch Back may be counting strokes on a new, 36-hole public course.

than the venue and golf course," said Midway's Kay Probst, one of the original property owners currently leasing acreage for farming. "It preserves it so no developer comes in and develops it. We all stood up and fought hard against the

A developer's attempt to purchase the property for a private golf course and hotel in 1993 was blocked by fierce public opposition.

"One of the biggest things that the owners did not want was a circus-type atmosphere. They wanted to

keep it as natural and untouched as possible," said Martin Van Roosendaal, former park superintendent. "The state guaranteed certain issues, and the first choice was to keep it natural so their children could ride horses in the area."

Utah Division of Parks and Recreation Director Courtland Nelson told the Utah Travel Council Dec. 1 that he is requesting Gov. Mike Leavitt and the Utah legislature allocate an approximate \$12 million revenue bond to finance the course facilities. He said the bond would be repaid with

GOLF COURSE continued on A4

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Sandy's River Oaks Golf Course may put the beer cart before the horse by closing the course to the public and becoming a private country club. River Oaks developer Ken Holman says the move would allow consumption of beer on the premises, now prohibited by Sandy City Council's 4-3 decision.

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Gov. Mike Leavitt gets an A- for putting state money for public education where his campaign mouth was. Leavitt asks Utah Legislature to pony up additional \$244.8 million to bring education budget (state, federal and local) to \$2.4 billion. Next question: Will lawmakers pass the same test?

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GOLF COURSE

CONTINUED FROM A1

player revenue and taxes would not increase. Nelson told the travel council the Soldier Hollow venue development, including sewer, water and irrigation lines, helped make the project possible.

The course development would include a group camping facility and day-use recreation area. Nelson also said a potential partnership with the U.S. Forest Service could lead to a ski hut system, new trails and Cascade Springs Road being paved.

If approved, construction would begin in the spring of 2002, according to the park's manager, Don Morgan. The course would be built between Cascade Springs Road and the Soldier Hollow venue near Charleston and Midway.

"We'd like to make it happen, but it all depends on the governor's budget being accepted and the course being part of it," said Morgan. "We will have more people, but it fits into making Soldier Hollow a year-round recreation area, as well as meeting the public's needs for additional recreational facilities."

Morgan said the main reasons the park would like the course approved are: a demand for golfing current Wasatch County courses are unable to

meet, and committing the property to a use that prevents future private builders from "unacceptable" development. The park would oversee the course's development.

The park task force, including Wasatch County's Economic Development Director, Robyn Pearson, Richard Buys, Chris Briscoe, park officials and legislation representatives, said feasibility studies show a need for at least one and a half additional golf courses in the area.

Probst concurs park visitor usage will increase if a course is developed, but believes new access roads would be a positive step by making the park more accessible to bikers, hikers and equestrians. He does not think the course would up water usage, since the fields are currently kept lush. The park has water rights with the Midway Irrigation Co.

"I don't believe anybody's told me anything against the golf course. I think a lot of family members would like it back. But, when it was purchased, it was purchased for fair market value," Roosendaal said. "I think the golf course will help finance the ski area. It may not be so good for the property, but good for business. But, if it isn't turned into a golf course, pretty soon you'd see the property totally gone, turned into hotels."

*"It preserves it so
no one comes in
and develops it."*

KAY PROBST
Former Landowner

such dispute over the summer since the latest census for 2000 has yet to be

Subtracting the 10 percent from the 24 percent, the office determined

Supreme Court To Hear Oral Briefs

Council Election Date Could Be Determined This Week

DEREK JENSEN

COURIER STAFF

Now that the overtime Presidential race has been decided, Wasatch County appears close to reaching some finality over their pesky council election date problem.

On Tuesday morning, attorneys from both sides were scheduled to deliver 10-minute oral briefs at the Utah Supreme Court. A ruling from the court was not yet available by the Courier's press deadline.

Gordon Duval, counsel for the initiative sponsors, was to deliver arguments for his clients whom are seeking a February special election. He prepared and delivered to the

Supreme Court an inch-and-a-half brief outlining their reasoning for the early election date.

Meanwhile, the County Commission ruled unanimously earlier this month to hold the election in November, 2002, the date of the next general election. According to the Commission, electing the new council during the general is consistent with current statutes.

County Attorney Derek Pullan or attorney Joe Tesch was expected to deliver the 10-minute brief for the county. It is unclear whether the Supreme Court will make an immediate ruling following the briefs or call for secondary hearings, likely to be scheduled for next week.

"I'd assume it's like the Florida Supreme Court," said Bob Wren, initiative sponsor. "If it's an election issue, they will probably expedite it and get it done quickly."